

# 4

## Outside-the-Brain Changes in Spellers and Writers

Take a look at Figure 4.1, which shows the changes in spelling produced by Paul in early writing samples reported by his mother, Glenda Bissex, who was a literacy researcher and author of *GNYS at WRK: A Child Learns to Read and Write*, a seminal and now classic account of one child's early reading and writing (1980).

Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4 are *exactly* the same phases as Ehri has reported for early word learning. Bissex's son Paul was precocious and advanced through the levels somewhat earlier and at a faster pace than many children, yet I remember reading this extraordinary book in 1980 and there were the developmental spelling levels staring me straight in the eye. I could see the critical aspects of each phase in Paul's development matching exactly the same developmental spelling levels researchers had been observing and writing about since the mid-1970s. Their genesis now seems to be the same as Ehri's phases of word learning for reading as reported in Chapter 3. While Bissex did not report the stages, I applied a *developmental spelling classification system* to the Bissex case study by using the spelling samples Bissex reported in *GNYS at WRK* to demonstrate the existence of the spelling stages "revealing developmental stages that researchers (Beers and Henderson 1977; Gentry 1977; Henderson and Beers 1980; Read 1975) have discovered in children's early spelling and writing" (1982, 192). The article entitled "An Analysis of Developmental Spelling in *GNYS at WRK*" first appeared in *The Reading Teacher* (1982) and was reprinted in materials such as *SET: Research Information for Teachers*. To me it seemed miraculous. We had discovered a metamorphosis outside the brain in developmental spelling and it had equally powerful applicability for the classroom or for rigorous research study. Here's a description of what the levels in the spelling metamorphosis looked like.

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Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4

FIGURE 4.

*Level 1.* Paul's early writing samples showed a lack of letter structure, often resulting in the lack of letter sound. "McDonald" was spelled "McDonal" and "strated fast" was spelled "strated fas". He knew the words but did not know the spelling. The spelling on paper did not represent the sound. Phonetic principles were not yet understood. "well" was spelled "wel". There was no letter structure in the writing—there were only a few letters and sounds. Much of the system, but

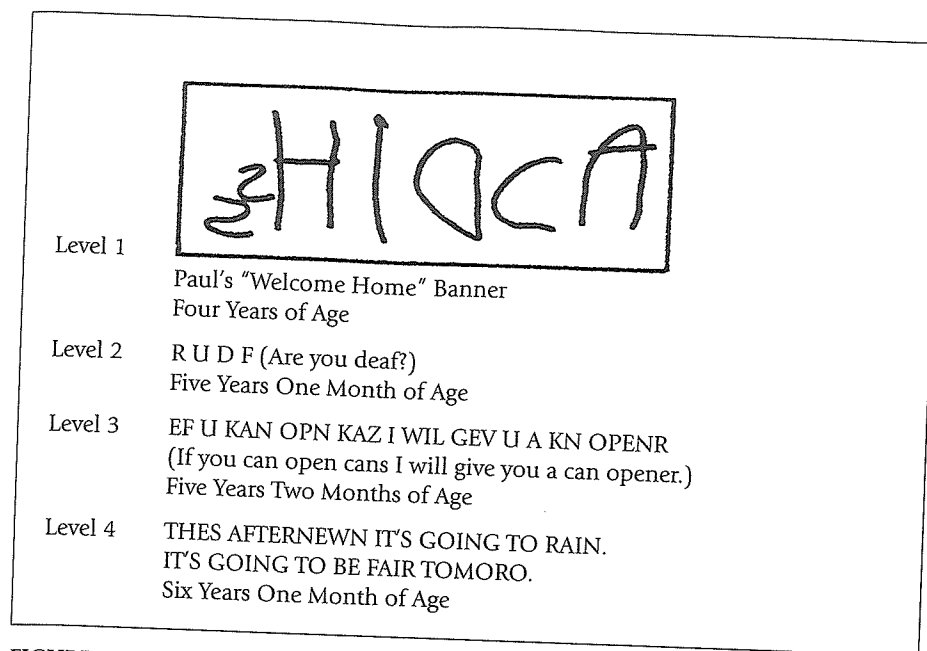


FIGURE 4.1 Four Levels of Paul's Writing Development

**Level 1.** Paul's writing (and other beginning writing) began at Level 1 in a phase of letter strings completely lacking letter-sound correspondence—very similar to the lack of letter-sound correspondence in a Level 1 logographic reading of "McDonald's" cued from the golden arches. At four years of age, Paul demonstrated fascination with writing and ability to write letters on paper well before he knew much at all of how alphabetic systems work. All alphabetic systems work the same way; they are operational systems of matching printed letters or letter combinations to particular sounds in a word. But just as beginning readers read words such as "stop" and "McDonald's" before they have any concept of how the letters of the alphabet do their work, beginning writers write letters on paper in a pre-alphabetic writing phase without awareness of what the letters represent. One might imagine that Paul was oblivious to the letter-sound alphabetic principle as he put down S-S-H-I-D-C-A on a 30 centimeter by 120 centimeter "welcome home" banner or when he typed strings of letters, which he described as notes to his friends (Bissex 1980, 4, reported in Gentry 1982). There was no alphabetic regularity in this four-year-old child's first attempts at writing—the pattern system was not yet apparent. There was not even regularity of a few matches of beginning sounds with letters; rather, a complete lack of letter-sound regularity was in evidence.

Much has been written about the *lack* of regularity in the English spelling system, but I now think researchers failed to recognize the regularity and were

mistaken to think that it was too obscure to be discovered by children. In fact there is wonderful, full, and complete regularity in English spelling; it is a regular, systematic, pattern system of both frequent, and *very infrequent*, regularities. The 1,022 spelling-to-sound letter combinations are present in any text of written English. So instead of thinking that English spelling is irregular, we should think of it as complex. Ll spells /l/, the first sound in *llama*, on a very regular basis—it works that way every time one sees it in *llama*. The letter combination *-ough* always spells the same set of sounds whenever it appears in a particular word. For example, any time you read *dough*, *bough*, *hiccough*, *through*, *thorough*, *rough*, and *bought*, *-ough* always represents the same sounds. The system is complex, however, because *-ough* can spell seven different sounds—not to mention the fact that there are at least twenty-four different ways to spell /sh/ and *dreamt* is the only word in the English language that ends in *-mt*!

I'm sure Paul was gleefully oblivious to all this complexity as he ventured forth in this first "tadpole" phase of writing. Metaphorically, he was just beginning to grow his legs as a writer. While there may have been some reason for writing SSHIDCA with the production of the seven letters in that particular order on his welcome home sign, it was a nonalphabetic reason. Paul could write with letters by putting them down on paper using some nonalphabetic theory to choose his letters *before* he knew the alphabetic system. Ehri's Level 1 descriptive term for reading phases of word learning, "pre-alphabetic level," works perfectly well for describing Paul's (and other children's) first spelling attempts at writing. Level 1 writers are attempting to create written words using letters before they know the system is an alphabetic, letter and letter-chunk system for mapping letters to sounds. Just as children know the label on the cereal box says something, Paul hypothesized that his string of letters said something and he attached the welcome home greeting to this arbitrary set of letters. At the moment he was writing he may have had "welcome home" in mind, but sometimes Level 1 writers say "What did I write?" and attach the meaning after the writing.

One cannot read Level 1 writing because the writing is not alphabetic. When I worked with Ed Henderson and others in the 1970s and 1980s who were investigating the stages or levels of developmental spelling that we were seeing as beginners emerged as writers, I first called this level "deviant," meaning that it deviated from normal alphabetic spelling (1977). But the label implied that the child was deviating from what was normal which, of course, is absolutely inaccurate. Level 1 writing is as normal as babbling in spoken language, so eventually I settled on what I hoped was a better term, "precommunicative" (1982). Precommunicative indicates that Level 1 is a level *before* the writer can communicate (encode) in writing (i.e., a reader cannot read Level 1 writing because the writing is precommunicative). Notice the good agreement with Ehri's term "pre-alphabetic" for this phase, which in essence is the same concept, which she later applied to reading (decoding). In both instances Level

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1 is a phase of nonalphabetic use of letters before the brain maps letters to sounds in order to encode or decode print.

*Level 2.* Paul's second phase of spelling development, first documented at five years one month of age, lasted only a few weeks, but this second writing level, as in Ehri's work in reading, marked the first use of letters to correspond to sounds. Not only did he produce RUDE (Are you deaf?) during this period, but quite a few other productions showing that he had learned a fairly large number of letter-sound correspondences: KR (car), BZR (buzzer), HAB (happy), OD (old), DP (dump), and even TLEFNMBER (telephone number) (Bissex 1980, reported in Gentry 1982). My first spelling classification system had used the term *prephonetic* to describe the second stage, meaning that it was *before* the child represented the full phonetic form. I described it this way in 1977: "Although prephonetic spellings do contain the rudiments of a phonetic system such as correct beginning and ending consonants, these spellings are usually greatly abbreviated and lack all the essential phonetic elements needed to represent the surface structure of a word" (Gentry 1977, 22). This original term, again, was misleading because obviously the Level 2 spellings are partly phonetic, not *prephonetic*. By 1981, I was using the term *semiphonetic* (1981) for Level 2 using the prefix *semi-* meaning "partly" or "not fully" as in *semiautomatic* or *semiconscious*. Again "semiphonetic" is in good agreement with Ehri's term for the second level of reading phases, "partial alphabetic" (Ehri 1997). I think it's interesting to show the closeness in the terminology that grew out of the studies of these early observations to describe the phases for spelling and reading because, to my knowledge, this work was largely independent: independent observers of spelling had seen the very same changes as later observations that were made in reading. In my view, Ehri's 1997 chapter, "Reading and Spelling Are One and the Same, Almost," is a hallmark publication citing the importance of reading and writing reciprocity because, for the first time, this study presented both the reading levels and the developmental spelling levels as simultaneously supporting reading/writing reciprocity.

Paul remained at Level 2 for only a short stint and quickly moved to Level 3, full phonetic representation, largely, I think, because of the good teaching and intervention he was receiving from his mother during the first month after his fifth birthday (Bissex 1980). What she was doing intuitively is what all teachers should be doing consciously to take advantage of reading and writing reciprocity. She showed great interest and provided encouragement for his invented spelling, including explicit teaching such as supplying letter-sound correspondences and suggesting spacing between words, which helped stabilize Paul's concept of word. As we have seen in Morris' work, Level 2 is the exact appropriate time for children to stabilize the concept that the printed word is a match for the spoken word. The concept that the word is an entity helps children "frame" or think about the word as a unit, thereby allowing them to think of the



beginning, middle, and ending of a word, or to think of consecutive word parts as sound elements (Henderson [1985] 1990; Morris 1981; Morris et al. 2003). By five years two months Paul had moved to Level 3 as documented in a message he typed that provides a letter for every sound in each word (except in the spelling of KN for *can*, which is Level 2): EF U KAN OPN KAZ I WIL GEV U A KN OPENR (If you can open cans I will give you a can opener.) (Bissex 1980, 11).

What happened with Paul in this short period is what should happen to all children as they begin to write and read. *They should be encouraged to test their hypotheses, praised for their attempts, heartened to create volume, and taught explicitly at their level of understanding with the right kind of instruction to move them to the next level.* Currently, this is not happening in many kindergarten classrooms. Too often we focus on isolated objectives. Rather than track each student's development through the phases of reading and writing and provide the type of instruction that fits the child's needs in a particular phase, teachers present isolated objectives, which may even be good instruction, but at the wrong time. Isolated objectives taught explicitly outside the child's level of understanding are a problem. Sometimes I wonder why we do so much elaborate and painstaking testing and talking about phonetic awareness, for example, when a child's level of developing phonetic awareness is so easily recognized by looking at their writing (if the child is in an environment where writing is encouraged and supported) just as Paul's phonemic awareness is so easily tracked from Levels 1, 2, and 3—from no awareness, to partial awareness, to full phonemic awareness at Level 3. Tracking this progress is the perfect measure of normal growth and any departure from this path is a clear signal that the child needs help, or early intervention. Tracking the phases of spelling and writing is a powerful and easy test for early interventions. In the chapters ahead you will learn not only to assess phonemic awareness by tracking writing development, but also to use exactly the right tools to move children through these critical levels of understanding.

*Level 3.* Paul was a prolific phonetic speller for about a year beginning at the end of five years one month and he wrote in a wide variety of forms such as signs, lists, notes, messages, letters, labels, captions, greeting cards, game boards, stories, directions, and statements (Bissex 1980, 15, reported in Gentry 1982). This is the kind of writing that should be routine and ongoing in every kindergarten classroom. Paul's Level 3 phonetic spelling is characterized by full phonemic awareness and his Level 3 strategy is to supply a letter for each sound in a word as in IFU LEV AT THRD STRET IWEL KOM TO YOR HAWS THE ED (If you live at third street I will come to your house. The End.) (Bissex 1980, 13, reported in Gentry 1982). Notice that this Level 3 strategy—a letter for each sound in each word—is in good agreement with the Level 3 reading strategy that Ehri describes as "full alphabetic" corroborating reading/writing reciprocity at Level 3. In the spelling classification system, Level 3 was described as "phonetic," a term that came out of the abundant literature that documented this particular stage (Beers 1974; Gentry 1977, 1978, 1981; Gentry and Henderson

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1978; Henderson and Beers 1980; Read 1971, 1975, 1986; Zutell 1975, 1978). In essence, what we were all seeing at this level was that the child supplied a letter for each phoneme or sound in the word as the strategy for inventing the spelling.

While Bissex did not report levels of spelling development, her astute observations and comments show that she was aware of obvious changes in Paul's thinking about how the system works and changes in his productions, and she documented some of his first analogizing mental exercises and correctly predicted that mental analogizing would move Paul into a new phase of spelling development:

While writing the song book, Paul observed, "you spell 'book' B-O-O-K. To write 'look' you just change one letter—take away the B and add an L." This mental spelling and word transforming continued after his writing spurt temporarily petered out: "If you took the L out of 'glass' and pushed it all together, you'd have 'gas,'" he mused while lying in bed. Such manipulation was the form that the next phase of his spelling development took. The following week (5:3) he mentally removed the L for "please" (for "peas" or "pee"), and after we had some conversation about Daedalus and Icarus, observed that "if you put an L in front of Icarus, you get 'licorice.'" And "if you take the T and R off of 'trike' and put a B in front, you have 'bike.'" (Bissex 1980, 15, reported in Gentry 1982)

Paul was discovering how the English spelling system works; he was learning to spell by analogy and would eventually move away from a letter for each sound to a chunking strategy for the regular patterns of English spelling.

**Level 4.** By about six years one month, Paul's Level 4 spellings reveal that he was using a chunking system to write in English, and although he was using chunks that spelled the sounds he needed, he had not yet learned the correct chunks or patterns for many words. That would come with experience and spelling instruction. His spelling, after six years one month, included a weather forecast: THES AFTERNEWN IT'S GOING TO RAIN. IT'S GOING TO BE FAIR TOMORO, and a news report FAKTARE'S (factories) CAN NO LONGER OFORD MAKING PLAY DOW (dough) (Bissex 1980, 46, reported in Gentry 1982). In the early research exploring the sequential development of spelling, this level was dubbed "transitional" (Beers 1974; Gentry 1977) because children were transitioning into correct or conventional spelling. We found Level 4 writers discovering and using the patterns—orthographic markers such as CVCe, for example, but with spellings such as MENE for *mean* and RANE for *rain* without the word-specific knowledge to determine correct use. With good spelling instruction and experience writing and reading, Level 4 writers activate the word form area of the brain, begin to produce many correct spellings automatically, and over time with study, they learn many more correct spellings, as Paul was beginning to

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demonstrate in Figure 4.1 with correctly spelled words such as *it's*, *going*, *to*, *rain*, *be*, *fair*, *can*, *no*, *longer*, *making*, and *play*. I now prefer Ehri's term "consolidated level" (1997) for Level 4 rather than the term "transitional," indicating that at this level children move from the Level 3 strategy of providing a letter for a sound to the Level 4 strategy of consolidating letters into chunks to spell both monosyllabic and polysyllabic words in parts by using chunks of letters to represent chunks of sound elements instead of one letter for each phoneme. Probably a better, more descriptive label for Level 4 than either "transitional" or "consolidated," would be "the chunking level." Paul's Level 3 message, produced with a letter-for-a-sound strategy, IFU LEV AT THRD STRET IWEL KOM TO YOR HAWS THE ED, likely would have looked something like the following rendering in chunks of spelling patterns at the next level, Level 4: IF YUO LIV AT THERD STREAT I WIL CUM TOO YORE HUOSE THE IND. In the second rendering, a Level 4 chunking strategy replaces the Level 3 letter-for-a-sound strategy. Notice these changes: Instead of U for *you*, the Level 4 speller chunks the correct letters but gets O and U out of order. Instead of using R to spell /er/ in *third*, he or she uses the -ER chunk. Instead of a letter for each of the five sounds in *street*, he or she spells *street* in two chunks: STR- and -EAT. Instead of the W-E-L letter-for-a-sound strategy for *will*, he or she spells *will* as a CVC chunk so that WIL is analogous to *wit*, *wiz*, or *wig*. The Level 4 speller uses a CVCe chunk for *you're*—YORE—rather than a letter for a sound. In each instance there is a chunking explanation for the choice of letters used in the Level 4 spelling.

### The Formulation of a Blueprint for Early Writing, Spelling, and Reading Development

Taken together, the spelling phases, writing phases, and reading phases provide a clear blueprint for what should be happening outside the brain as beginning writers and readers go through four phases of development. The blueprint is designed to chart a course of what to expect with early reading and writing development. While one should expect individual variation in the exact time and duration as children go through specific phases, the phases are consistent, easy to detect, and powerful in helping the teacher determine if a child is progressing normally. Both experience and exposure to print greatly affect individual development. These conditions accepted, the blueprint is an exact and detailed outline of what to expect, and it will help you plan for the type and timing of instruction that might best move the learner forward as well as help you determine when development seems to be off track, and whether special instructional intervention may be needed.

It should be noted that a number of conditions might exist making it possible for a child to be in one phase as a reader and in another phase as a writer at the same time. Sometimes we observe children transitioning from one phase into the next higher phase. Since reading a word is easier than spelling a word, a child may process chunks and patterns in reading a little before he or she

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consistently uses chunks of spelling patterns in writing. For example, as we saw in the Bissex case study, Paul discovered how to make spelling analogies such as *look* from *book*, *gas* from *glass*, *peas* from *please*, and *bike* from *trike* even while his primary writing strategy was the Level 3, one-letter-for-each-sound strategy. At the same time he was a Level 3 writer, his mother recorded some of his Level 4 musings ("you spell 'book' B-O-O-K. To write 'look' you just change one letter—take away the B and add an L") demonstrating that he began thinking about how word parts worked in chunks well before he consistently used the chunking strategy in his writing.

Sometimes, a considerable mismatch between reading phases and writing phases is a red flag to indicate that instruction is not well balanced. Children who receive little opportunity to write in school, for example, and too little appropriate writing instruction sometimes excel as readers but struggle as writers and spellers. I reported on one such incidence a number of years ago in my book, *Spel . . . Is a Four-Letter Word* (1987) in a case study of Dan, who came to the university reading clinic in January of his first-grade year reading above second-grade level but struggling, even refusing to write, demonstrating a huge discrepancy in writing levels and reading levels. His writing was Level 2 while his reading was Level 4. The etiology of his writing disability turned out to be simple: he never had experienced real writing in kindergarten and first grade. He did little writing in kindergarten that focused on socialization and self-concept, and during his stint in first grade it was customary in his school for writing lessons in the first half of the year to consist of copying the teacher's stories from the board with all words spelled correctly—which was not uncommon in the 1980s. At that time children were often discouraged from using invented spelling because it was presumed that inventing incorrect spellings would turn them into poor spellers. In fact, we now know that beginners greatly benefit from inventing spelling, which should be balanced with appropriate instruction leading to correct spelling. (Gentry 2000b; International Reading Association 1998; Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998).

One of the major benefits of following the Blueprint is that it helps the teacher determine when and what type of early intervention may be needed. Early intervention following the Blueprint enabled Dan to advance from his first week at Level 2 status in writing to Level 3 and then Level 4 in just sixteen weeks, as shown in Figure 4.2. During this period he wrote thirty stories, including titles such as "The Dukes of Hazzard," "Muggs," "Toothpaste," "Feelings," "James Bond," "\$100.00," "Rocks," "Our Treehouse," and "My Dog." These are the kind of titles and self-selected topics that *all* kindergartners and first graders should be writing about. Dan invented 186 spellings during his sixteen-week spurt in writing at my Reading Center, allowing his neurons to fire over and over as his brain constructed new connections and a deeper understanding of how the English spelling system works. In just sixteen weeks his writing levels caught up with his reading (Gentry 1987). One point to be made here is that ignoring writing/reading reciprocity not only is a missed opportunity for fostering



Time	Sample	Writing/Spelling Level
First Week in February	If I had a magic pair of boots, I would I would make gold. 24 CRTS. (carats) I would play football. I would read CLFFORD (Clifford) books. I would BIY a CAMR. (camera) I would BLO up pluto. I would play BASKBALL. (basketball) I would go to New York and See the STATU of LBRTE (liberty) I would go out west. I'd go to the grand CANYN. (Canyon) And BIY a SLATITI. (stalactite) I would take a trip down the COLORDO (Colorado) RREVR (River) on a raft.	Level 2: Partial Alphabetic Writing (He leaves out some sounds when invent- ing most spellings.) Semiphonetic Spellings in the sample are indicated by showing the word spelled correctly in parentheses. BLO is Pho- netic. STATU is Phonetic. BIY is Transitional.
First Week in March	My OL truck My truck is gray. My truck SHOTS water out. On the side it SES MOBOL. It ROLS and Jumps ramps. It's black, blue, Red, and white. I play WETH it.	Level 3: Full Alphabetic Writing (He invents with a letter for a sound and represents all sounds.) This sample has five Phonetic spellings. MOBOL is Transitional.
First Week in May	My Foot My feet are flesh. I WHAIR SIS 3. My feet take me EVREWHAIR My feet like to CLIME trees and BILLDINGS. I walk to school. My feet make me SWEM In water. My feet are TIYERD at the end of the day.	Level 4: Consolidated Alphabetic Writing (He invents in chunks of phonics patterns.) This sample has five Transitional spellings. SIS and SWEM are Phonetic.

FIGURE 4.2 Dan's Writing Development over Sixteen Weeks in First Grade

reading development, but it can also be the cause of literacy problems, as in Dan's case. (It's interesting to note that Dan grew up to become a medical doctor. I wonder what would have happened without early intervention for his struggle with writing.)

Monitoring phase development in both reading and writing, following the Intervention Blueprint in Chapter 6, allows the teacher to fine tune his or her planning for the appropriate type and timing of instruction by teaching into what children are doing both as a writer and as a reader (see Chapters 6 and 7 and the Appendix). The Blueprint allows the teacher to track and assess expected development. This powerful instrument for determining which children need early intervention enables the teacher to monitor each child's

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development and check the minimal expected time for movement through a particular phase. Both time and grade level indicators for *minimal expected competency* are provided, which is a gauge of the point at which failure to move through a phase or exhibit the expected behaviors of a phase should be construed as a signal that the child may not be progressing normally in literacy development. If a child is not functioning in the phase at the time of the grade level indicated, there is a need for intervention (Gentry 2004, 2000a, 2000b). These "minimal standards" are based on research syntheses including *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns, and Griffin 1998), *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children* (International Reading Association 1998) and my own synthesis of research (Gentry 2004a, 2000a, 2000b). With superior teaching, or under other optimal conditions such as early and ongoing exposure to literacy in the home, many children will exceed the benchmarks that are listed in the Intervention Blueprint for each phase as the "minimal competency expectancy level" (see page 47). In fact, many teachers in kindergarten and first grade classrooms where writing is being taught successfully will have whole classes where children achieve well above these minimal competency benchmarks, which is precisely my objective for every classroom.

In addition to determining whether there is a need for intervention, the Blueprint helps the teacher determine if a child's reading and writing development are in sync. If large discrepancies in reading phases and writing phases are noted, as in Dan's case as just described, the child may need intervention or a better balance of reading and writing instruction.

Here's a summary of what we have learned in Chapter 4: Just as tadpoles go through four visible phases in becoming a frog—losing their tails, growing legs, developing lungs, and finally eating insects—immature readers go through four phases leading to skilled, mature reading that are easily viewed in their writing. First they put letters on paper that do not correspond to sounds, next they use beginning and some ending sounds, and in the third phase they use a letter for each sound they hear in a word. Finally, they spell in chunks of letter patterns. This last phase, writing in chunks—*in-ter-est-ing; Al-a-bam-a; el-e-phant; tel-e-phone*—is the level where the brain begins to recognize and produce spelling patterns automatically. The four writing phases are the same phases that were later discovered by researchers in word reading. Phase 4 is necessary for the lower level processes of reading and writing to become automatic. Phase 4 is when the frog hops away from the pond!

Now you must make a choice. You may wish to tackle the complex Instructional Blueprint with all its nuances presented in its entirety in the Appendix. The Instructional Blueprint is academic and complex, which at this point some readers may find too dense for easy reading. (Once terminology presented in this book such as "Precommunicative Spelling," "scaffolded writing," "consolidated alphabetic writing," and "materialization" become second nature, you will find the academic treatment most useful in steering your instructional

course. This treatment provides a complex and full research base for the more accessible Intervention Blueprint presented in Chapter 6. The Instructional Blueprint in the Appendix will guide you as you observe what an emerging writer or reader is doing with the code, and ultimately give you confidence to make appropriate and wise instructional decisions, no matter what theoretical stance, reading program, or instructional framework underpins your work. The Instructional Blueprint shows the phases all beginning writers and readers go through in breaking the code. It presents specifications and behaviors and helps you plan instruction for all literacy modes (writing, spelling, and reading) presented hierarchically from lower to higher levels of literacy sophistication, that is, from nonalphabetic, to pre-alphabetic, to partial alphabetic, to full alphabetic, and finally to consolidated alphabetic (or chunking) phases. This blueprint will show you what to expect at each level as a reader, writer, and speller operates in a given phase. While the Instructional Blueprint specifies phase behaviors at each level for writing, spelling, and reading separately, it also shows how these literacy modes are connected at each level. The treatment in the Appendix calls upon the reader to understand code breaking on an academic level through a synthesis of complex and technical academic information.

Many readers may prefer to go directly to Chapter 5 and then to Chapter 6, The Intervention Blueprint, and save the technical academic treatment presented in the Appendix for later analysis and synthesis. Chapter 6 will show you what to look for in a child's writing to signal appropriate early intervention during emergent literacy. Highlighting reading and writing reciprocity and providing the right kind of early instruction and early intervention is precisely what every kindergarten and first grade teacher must do to succeed with early literacy instruction to move pedagogy forward. The Intervention Blueprint makes it easy to see exactly when a developing writer needs early intervention to ensure that both writing and reading development are moving forward, and it will show what kind of instructional intervention the child needs so that no child is left behind.

Both blueprints will show precisely how children get to Phase 4—the final phase of breaking the code, which activates the brain circuitry for automatic processing of words and allows for automatic reading and automatic spelling, the nexus for eventual fluency for both reading and writing.

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